

Great Faith – A Crowd of Witnesses pt. 2

(Hebrews 11:17-22 nlt)

¹⁷ It was by faith that Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when God was testing him. Abraham, who had received God's promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, ¹⁸ even though God had told him, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted."^[a] ¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again. And in a sense, Abraham did receive his son back from the dead.

²⁰ It was by faith that Isaac promised blessings for the future to his sons, Jacob and Esau.

²¹ It was by faith that Jacob, when he was old and dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons and bowed in worship as he leaned on his staff.

²² It was by faith that Joseph, when he was about to die, said confidently that the people of Israel would leave Egypt. He even commanded them to take his bones with them when they left.

- Abraham never wavered believing the promise of God. He believed it so much that he was willing to sacrifice his promise child Isaac because he knew God was able to bring him back to life
- Because of what God promised Abraham that he will have descendants as numerous as the stars. And that all the families on earth will be blessed through him

- Isaac passed that blessing to Jacob
- Jacob whose sons became the original 12 tribes of Israel but because the tribe of Levi was set apart for priestly duties and didn't receive a traditional territorial inheritance.
- Jacob blessing Joseph's sons is important because eventually Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh replaced Joseph and Levi to maintain the number of 12 tribes of Israel
- Joseph didn't get to see the promise land but he knew that one day God will bring his people there, that he prophesied to take his bones when they leave
- Joseph believed God will bring the Israelites to the land he promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Instructing them to carry his bones during the exodus provided a tangible reminder that Egypt was not their permanent home, refusing to be buried in a land of bondage

(Hebrews 11:23-29 nlt)

²³ It was by faith that Moses' parents hid him for three months when he was born. They saw that God had given them an unusual child, and they were not afraid to disobey the king's command.

²⁴ It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.²⁵ He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin.²⁶ He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of Christ than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his great reward. ²⁷ It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt, not fearing the king's anger. He kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible. ²⁸ It was by faith that Moses commanded the people of Israel to keep the Passover and to sprinkle blood on the doorposts so that the angel of death would not kill their firstborn sons.

²⁹ It was by faith that the people of Israel went right through the Red Sea as though they were on dry ground. But when the Egyptians tried to follow, they were all drowned.

- During the time that Moses was born, Pharaoh commanded that all newborn Hebrew boys be thrown in the Nile river
- Since the womb the enemy wanted to destroy his purpose
- Thank God that Moses' mother could see that Moses was different and that she saved his life
- When you are born with a purpose for a purpose, you won't feel at ease until you're living your purpose

(Hebrew 11:30-40 nlt)

³⁰ It was by faith that the people of Israel marched around Jericho for seven days, and the walls came crashing down.

³¹ It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute was not destroyed with the people in her city who refused to obey God. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

³² How much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets. ³³ By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their loved ones back again from death.

But others were tortured, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free. They placed their hope in a better life after the resurrection. ³⁶ Some were jeered at, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in prisons. ³⁷ Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half,^[d] and others were killed with the sword. Some went about wearing skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated. ³⁸ They were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised. ⁴⁰ For God had something better in mind for us, so that they would not reach perfection without us.

- By faith they overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, they shut the mouths of lions, quenched the flames of fire and escape death by the edge of the sword. Women received their loved one back again from death
- But others suffered death, torture, imprisonment, being mistreated living destitute and oppressed
- But yet the bible says all of them earn a good reputation because of their faith

(Hebrews 12:1-4 nlt)

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. ²We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.^[a] Because of the joy^[b] awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. ³Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people;^[c] then you won't become weary and give up. ⁴After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin.

- Hebrews chapter 11 was the hall of famers of faith. The bible says we are surrounded by them as crowd of witnesses to the life of faith
- Everyone has a race that God has set before you. Every race is different than other but every race will have trails, difficulties moments when you want to give up

- But if you keep your eyes on Jesus and focus on him you will finish your race
- Forget those things which are behind you and press forward to the high calling of God

(Philippians 3:12-14 nlt)

¹²I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.¹³No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it,^[d] but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

- God as called you into freedom. And the truth will make you free so If God as set you free don't get tied of in slavery again.

(Galatians 5:1-10 nlt)

5 So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law.

2 Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: If you are counting on circumcision to make you right with God, then Christ will be of no benefit to you. **3**I'll say it again. If you are trying to find favor with God by being circumcised, you must obey every regulation in the whole law of Moses. **4**For if you are trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law, you have been cut off from Christ! You have fallen away from God's grace.

5But we who live by the Spirit eagerly wait to receive by faith the righteousness God has promised to us. **6**For when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, there is no benefit in being circumcised or being uncircumcised. What is important is faith expressing itself in love.

7You were running the race so well. Who has held you back from following the truth? **8**It certainly isn't God, for he is the one who called you to freedom. **9**This false teaching is like a little yeast that spreads through the whole batch of dough! **10**I am trusting the Lord to keep you from believing false teachings. God will judge that person, whoever he is, who has been confusing you.

- Run your race to win, run with purpose in every step

(1 Corinthians 9:24-27 nlt)

²⁴ Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win!²⁵ All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. ²⁶ So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. ²⁷ I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

- The prize is there is the crown of righteousness that awaits all those who eagerly look forward to the lords appearing

(2 Timothy 4:6-8 nlt)

⁶ As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near.⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. ⁸ And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.